

THE DEAD MANS SONG,

Who dwelling was near Basing-hall in London. To the Tune of, Flying Fame

So sick dear friends long time I was
And weakly laid in bed,
And for the hours in all mens sight,
at length I lay as dead.
The bell rang out, my friends came in,
and I key-cold was found,
Then was my carkasse brought from bed
and laid upon the ground.

My loving wife did weep full sore,
my children loud did cry,
My friends did mourn, yet this they said
all flesh is born to die:
My winding-sheet prepared was,
my grave was also made;
And for the hours by full repose,
in this same case I laid.

During which time my soul did see
such strange and fearful sights,
That for to hear the same discloses,
would banish all delights:
Not like the Lords restor'd my life,
which from my bodie fled;
I will declare the sight I saw,
the time that I was dead.

We thought upon a lobeile green,
where pleasant flowers sprang,
I took my way whereas I thought,
the Doves sweet little sang:
The grass was sweet the trees were fair
and lobeile to behold.
And full of fruits was every twig,
which shined like glistering gold.

My cheerful heart desired much,
to taste the fruit most fair;
But as I reacht a fair young man,
to me did make repair:
Touch not, said he, its none of thine,
but tend and walk with me;
And see thou mark each several thing,
which I shall show to thee.

I wondered greatly at his words,
yet went with him away,
Till on a goodlie pleasant bank,
with him he bade me stay:
Which branches then of Lillies white,
mine eyes there wip'd be,
When this was done he bade me look,
what I far off could see.

I looked up and lo at last,
I did a City see,
So fair a thing did never man,
behold with mortal eye:
Of diamonds, peales, and precious stones
it seems the walls were made;
The houses all with beaten gold,
were tiled and overlaid.

More bright then the morning Sun,
the light thereof did shew,
And every Creature in the same,
like crowned Kings did go:
The fields about the City fair,
were all with Roses set;

Gilliflowers and Carnations fair,
which cunners could not treat.
And from the fields there did proceed
a sweet and pleasant smell,
That every living Creature felt,
the scent did so excel:
It does such sweet and pleasant mirth,
did from the City sound,
That I therewith was ravished,
my joy did so abound.

With musick, mirth and melody,
Princes did there imbace,
That in my heart I long'd to be.
Within that blisseful place:
The more I gaz'd, the more I might,
the sight pleas'd me so well;
For what I saw in every thing,
my tongue can no way tell.

Then of the man I did demand,
what place the same might be,
Whereas so many things did dwell,
in joy and melody:
Quoth he that blisseful place is heaven,
where yet thou canst not rest;
And those that do like Princes walk,
are men whom God hath blest.

Then did he turn me round about,
and on the other side,
He bade me view and mark as much,
what things were to be spied:
Which that I saw a Coal-black Man,
all tan'd with soot and smook,
Where smoking batmans burning was,
which made me like to choke.

An ugly creature there I saw,
whose face with knives were flayd,
And in a cauldron of popson'd filth,
his ugly corpes was waid:
About his neck were sundrie ruffs,
that flam'd on every side;
I askt, and lo the young man said,
that he was damn'd for pride.

Another sort there did I see,
whose bowels Wipers tore,
And grievously with gaping mouth,
they did both peil and roar:
A spotted person by each one,
stood gnawing on their hearts;
And this was conscience I was told,
that plagu'd the inward parts.

They were no sooner out of sight,
but straight came in their place,
A sort still consuming burning fire,
which fell against their face:
And Ladies full of melted Gold
were pour'd down their throats,
And these were set it seem'd to me,
in midst of burning heats.

The foremost of the companie
was Judas I was told,
Who had for this Luccas sake,
his Lord and Master sold:

For covetousness they were condemn'd
so it was told to me,
And there me thought another sort
of hell hounds I did see.

Their faces they seem'd fat in sight,
yet all their bones were bare;
And dishes full of crawling Toads,
were made their finest fare:
From arms, from hands, from thighs and
with red hot pincers then, (feet)
The flesh was pluckt even from the bone
of those vile gluttonous men.

On Coal-black beds another sort,
in grisous sort did lie;
And underneath them burning brands,
their flesh did burn and fry:
Which by many fierce their pillows shew
whereon their heads were laid,
And hands with glowing whips of fire,
their treacherous flesh off laid.

Then did I see another come,
flab'd in with daggers thick,
And filthie stinks with fiery darts,
their hearts did wound and prick:
And mighty bowls of corrupt blood,
was brought for them to drink:
And these men were for murder plagu'd
from whence they could not shrink.

I saw when they were gone away,
the sweate and the lyar,
And they were hung up by the tongues
over a flame of fire:
From eyes, from ears, from nabel & nose
and from their lower parts,
The blood me thought did rushing run,
and clogged like mens hearts.

I asked why that punishment,
was now in sweaters laid,
Because quoth he, wounds heart and blood
were still the each they made:
And there withal from ugly hell,
such grisous cries I heard,
As though some greater grief and care,
had tortur'd them after ward.

So that my soul was sore afraid,
such terror on me fell,
Away then went the young man quite,
and bade me not farewell:
Wherefore unto my body straight,
my spirit return'd again;
And helpe blood did afterwards
stretch forth in every vein.

My closed eyes I opened,
and rais'd up from my swoond,
I wonder'd much to see my self,
laid so upon the ground:
Which when my neighbours did behold,
great fear upon them fell,
To whom soon after I did tell,
the news from heaven and hell.